

# The Jaycee Family Park – A Historical Perspective

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Fifty years ago, the City of Las Vegas owned a 32-acre plot of land on the south side of East St. Louis between Eastern and Atlantic. The City planned to deed the land to the Catholic Church as the site for the St. Viator Church. Unfortunately it was discovered that the land had once been a city dump and was unsuitable to build on.

At that time this land was in the southeastern-most portion of the city... an area in great need of parks and recreational facilities. Unfortunately the city did not have the funds, so the Las Vegas Jaycees offered to help build the park if the city would maintain it and name the park in their honor.

With proceeds from their annual Jaycee County Fair the Jaycees purchased materials, and using equipment donated by Jaycee members they contoured the land and dug holes for new trees and fence posts.

The Jaycees worked tirelessly to transform an unimproved desert dumpsite into the beautiful park that residents enjoy today. For many years on weekends and evenings, the Jaycee members would bring their families out to help plant trees, put up fencing and install irrigation. It was a lot of work but it was also a great family activity. Little kids would get out their shovels and dig holes like their daddies or water plants with buckets. Those kids, now in their 30s and 40s still remember the fun they used to have.

All the members of the Las Vegas Jaycees from back in those days fondly remember their efforts and they are extremely proud of their accomplishments. Seeing the park enjoyed by so many families is their best reward.

I hope this provides some perspective on the creation of the Jaycee Family Park which continues to serve so many Las Vegans.

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